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(54) Title: METHODS AND TEST KITS FOR EVALUATING THE PRESENCE AND SEVERITY OF RESPIRATORY TRACT INFLAMMATION

(57) Abstract

The present invention is related to diagnostic methods and test kits for physicians and veterinarians to enable an easy and rapid diagnosis of the level and severity of respiratory tract inflammation without elaborate laboratory facilities and qualified laboratory personnel. The method and test kits are based on a unbiased evaluation of the amount matrix metalloproteinases (MMPs) and/or related molecules (MMP-RMs) in respiratory secretion samples. An increased amount of MMPs in respiratory fluid as compared with the amount found in healthy persons is a reliable indication of the level, severity and/or tissue destructive active phase(s) of inflammation in respiratory tracts and also enables targeting of medical treatment as well as prediction of the risks for complication in connection with infections, inflammation as well as environmental and physical stress factors, e.g. for athletes participating in sporting events. A lot of money is also involved for example in racing businesses, wherein it is important for the veterinarian working in field conditions to be able to decide whether a horse can participate in a race or not.

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